

CITY OF NOME

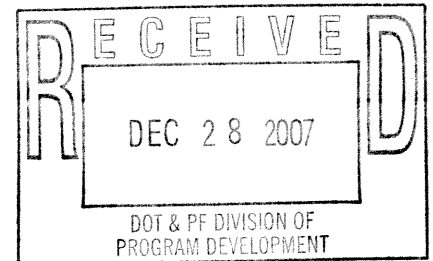
Celebrating 100 Years of Gold Rush History

Incorporated April 9, 1901

December 18, 2007

Eric Taylor, Project Manager
DOT&PF Division of Program Development
PO Box 112500
Juneau, Alaska 99801-2500

VIA Fax: (907) 465-6984



Dear Mr. Taylor,

The City of Nome would like to submit the following comments to the DOT's "2030 Let's Get Moving" Long Range Transportation Policy Plan Update.

The City of Nome firmly believes that transportation and its support systems are the foundation for economic development. The transportation systems must be efficient, cost-effective and environmentally sound. For Nome and the Seward Peninsula, airports and ports provide the major transportation system for the short-term. Roads and railroads provide potential systems in the longer-term analysis. Unfortunately the LRTP only addressed rail along the proposed pipeline and to meet the needs of urban Alaska. The needed transportation infrastructure for this region must be dual purpose, in that it must support import of finished goods and export of resources (finished and raw).

The City of Nome understands the fiscal position the State DOT is under as the Federal Highway program funds are not sufficient to meet the needs and expectation of Alaska's citizens. The proposed State LRTP number one priority will be to focus on the National Highway System, leaving minimal funding for Alaska Highway Systems and local roads. This priority will put a severe disadvantage on rural Alaska, which has many unmet needs in the form of transportation infrastructure.

The City of Nome does not have any National Highway System Routes. The City of Nome is very grateful to have access to State Highway System Routes. Three roads of approximately 75 miles each originate from Nome. They are the Nome-Teller Highway, Nome-Council Road and the Nome-Taylor Highway (including local roads within the City Front Street, Steadman and Bering Streets). Along the roadways are numerous subsistence camps, recreational cabins, mining operations, historic sites, scenic viewing opportunities and wetland areas noted worldwide for bird watching.

We do agree with some of the strategic plan of action's and hope those strategies will provide rural Alaska with options to improve its needed transportation infrastructure. Specifically:

"Action 4.1 Pursue state funding mechanisms." We agree with the Transportation Stakeholder's Group recommendation for the State of Alaska to establish a State Transportation Fund to meet the needs of local/community roads in rural Alaska.

"Action 4.7 Reinstitute the Local Service Roads and Trails Program." We agree with this plan of action and fully support the efforts to bring this program back to address the needs in rural Alaska.

"Ports and Harbors." We urge the State of Alaska to create a state program for construction and upgrade of ports and harbors. Alaska needs a comprehensive system approach for a developing our economy to tap into Alaska's resources and fisheries. With the onset of climate change, scientists predict the opening of the Northern and Northwest Passage Sea Routes. The port of Nome will be the first port they encounter traveling those routes; or we will be the last port they encounter before traveling between the Diomed Islands, which will become a bottle neck for ocean-going vessel traffic.

The State of Alaska needs to be prepared for the proposed increase in ocean going vessel traffic. The State of Alaska and local communities need to be prepared for the potential infrastructure and economic impacts to meet the basic needs for ocean-going vessels. The State of Alaska is in a strategic location for national security. Most importantly Nome is concerned about safety and the environment. We need to be proactive and be prepared for environmental disasters in the Bering Sea and Arctic Ocean and to be able to respond in a timely manner.

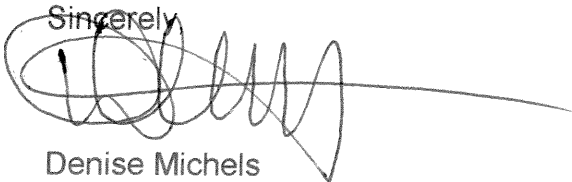
"Airports: Bike and Pedestrian trails." Once again the plan concentrates on urban needs. Many rural hubs including Nome need these trails to and from the airport; along with trails to schools. We encourage the LRTP to revisit this need which will provide safe mobility for pedestrians in rural hubs.

As stated on page 45, Alaska has neither taxes nor highway user fees dedicated to transportation needs. We encourage the State of Alaska to research this option of highway user fees for a dedicated transportation program.

Under the "System development needs for Airports" (exhibit 20, page 61) list the Northwest Area Plan as "none". The Nome Airport Master Plan identifies extending the runway to meet the needs of air transportation and to move City Field. We request that you review the plan to see if "none" needs to be corrected to reflect the needs.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at 443-6600. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Denise Michels", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Denise Michels
Mayor

cc: Nome Common Council